

## The Christian And Persecution

**1PE 3:13 And who is there to harm [mistreat] you if you prove zealous [enthusiastic, eager] for what is good?**

- Lit. "you become zealots of the good." - See **Rom. 12:9**
- The same thought is presented in 1 Peter 2:12 and 15.

1PE 2:12 Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may on account of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation.

1PE 2:15 For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men.

- "harm" is from "kakoo" [ka ko' o] meaning to "harm, hurt, injure, mistreat."
  - "zealous" comes from "zelotes" [zay lo tace'] meaning 'zealous, eager, enthusiastic, zealots.'
1. As a general rule, people will not harm us if we are zealous to do good. The possibility of suffering was real, but remote for doing good.
    - a. Paul had taught this. (Rom. 13:1-7).
    - b. Peter had earlier taught this in this very epistle. (1 Pet. 2:13-17).
  2. There are exceptions as manifested by verses 14 & 17. See also 1 Peter 1:6; 2:20-25; 4:12.
  3. Some Christians have suffered for wrong doing, and Peter warns against this. (1 Pet. 4:16-17).
  4. Peter himself was an exception to the general rule.
    - a. He suffered for doing right as an apostle. (Acts 5, 12).
    - b. He died a violent death. (2 Pet. 1:13, 14).

JOH 21:18 "Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself, and walk wherever you wished; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to go."

JOH 21:19 Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "Follow Me!"

5. Paul had suffered for doing right (2 Cor. 11:23-27), and tradition says he was crucified.

### Note:

- "Harm" may denote physical harm. Physical harm has come upon many Christians, but many have not suffered physical persecution.

- “Harm” may be used of spiritual harm. (Matt. 10:28; Lk. 21:16,18; Rom. 8:31).
- Evil men could kill Christians, but they could not work any real harm to Christians. Our soul is protected by God inasmuch as we pursue what is right. This should be motivation to be “zealous” of good works. .

**1PE 3:14 But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness [doing right], {you are} blessed. And do not fear their intimidation [threats], and do not be troubled[ by their opposition],**

- Lit. “blessed” - the words “you are” are supplied.
1. Peter concedes there are exceptions and some do “suffer for the sake of righteousness.”
    - a. The Greek “paschoite” [from Gr. pas’cho] is optative mode and suggests there is little likelihood that all would suffer for doing right.
    - b. Some will suffer, but many will not.
    - c. This was not true during the time of Nero and at some other times throughout history.
    - d. Peter may be writing in view of the opposition to Christians at that time, and may or may not be addressing the case for Christians in every age.
  2. Jesus taught we might suffer because of righteous conduct. (Matt. 5:10-12; Jn. 15:18-23).
  3. Paul indicated Christians would suffer. (2 Tim. 3:12).
    - a. The “all” may be a hyperbole, at least, in regard to severe persecution. See Matt. 3:5,6; Jn. 21:25.
    - b. Many Christians have never been severely persecuted and some can recall no persecutions at all.
  4. “And do not fear their intimidation, and do not be troubled”
    - McCord “Be courageous and undisturbed.
    - ESV -“have no fear of them, nor be troubled.”
    - Lit. “But fear of them fear you not nor be you troubled.”
      - a. See Isa. 8:12,13

ISA 8:12 "You are not to say, 'It is a conspiracy!' In regard to all that this people call a conspiracy, And you are not to fear what they fear or be in dread of it.

ISA 8:13 "It is the Lord of hosts whom you should regard as holy. And He shall be your fear, And He shall be your dread.

    - b. Isaiah told the people not to fear the invading Assyrian armies but to revere God.
    - c. Christians must not be intimidated by evil men and cease to be zealous for good.
    - d. Christians must not conform to the evil of the world. (Rom. 12:1,2).

## “Sanctify Christ As Lord”

**1PE 3:15 but sanctify [set apart, revere] Christ as Lord in your hearts, always {being} ready to make a [logical] defense to everyone who asks you to give an account [the reason] for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence;**

- “hagiazō”[ha gee a’ zo] is to “set apart, sanctify.” **It has the idea of obeying Christ, the Lord, from the heart.**
  - “heart” - Prov. 4:23; Matt. 15:15-20; Matt. 22:37; Rom. 2:29; 2 Tim. 2:22.
  - “always {being} ready” - Gr. “aei” (ah ay’]. We never know when we will be questioned concerning the hope in us.
  - “Christ” comes from “christos” [khris tos’] and means “anointed one” denoting Jesus was the anointed King.
1. The Christian must “sanctify Christ as Lord” in his heart.
    - a. Christ is not just an historical Person who lived and did some good things.
    - b. It is not enough to just accept some facts about Him
    - c. Christ is not just a good or exceptional man to be admired.
    - d. It is not enough for Him to be just Savior.
    - e. He is to be “Lord.” (Lk.6:46). See Jn. 14:15; 15:14; Heb. 5:9. We must seek to please Him in all things and do all things by His authority. (Col. 3:17).
    - f. Christians must dedicate their hearts to Him. God wants our heart. (Prov. 4:23; Matt. 15:15-20; 22:37).
    - g. He must live in us as He did Paul. (Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:21).
  2. The Christian must “always” be ready to make a defense [Gr. apologi’a] of “the hope” in them.
    - a. This requires diligent study. (2 Tim. 2:15).
    - b. This requires wisdom from God. (Jas. 1:5,6).
    - c. This requires that we answer “with gentleness and reverence,” not with malice or sarcasm.
    - d. Christians must speak truth in love. (Eph. 4:15). This does not mean that we never reprove.

LUK 17:3 "Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.

2TI 4:2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.

- e. Our speech should “always be with grace” and “seasoned, as it were, with salt.”

COL 4:6 Let your speech always be with grace [favor], seasoned, as it were, with salt, so that you may know how you

should respond to each person. Lit. “having been seasoned with salt.”

- 1) “Salt” [Gr. hal’as] adds flavor to food, but not if one uses too much or too little. Christians are “the salt of the earth.” (Matt. 5:13). “Salt” flavors, preserves, creates thirst.
  - 2) Our speech must be gracious and loving mixed with salt that we know just how to answer those who question us whether they be sincere or insincere. “Salt” may here stand for “the salt of wisdom and prudence.” It is, of course, includes living an exemplary life in our conduct and speech. (Matt. 5:13; Mk. 9:50).
  - 3) Our speech should be such that unbelievers are impressed by our speech and answers.
  - 4) Our speech should be gracious and wholesome - not rude, vulgar, sarcastic, insincere, slanderous, malicious, etc.
- f. Christians should be ready when the opportunity arises to give answer for the faith in them.
- 1) Christians must study their Bibles. See Jn. 8:32; Eph. 5:15. They are not to remain on an elementary level (Heb. 6:1), and be content to remain babes in Christ. (1 Pet. 2:2).
  - 2) They may not be able to answer every question, but they should be able to give the fundamentals of faith.
  - 3) They should know where to find answers to questions they do not know how to answer.
  - 4) There are tons of good resources available online, in books, and from elders, teachers, etc.
- g. This does not mean Christians should respond to those who have no appreciation for sacred things. (Matt. 7:6).
- h. This does not mean we are to engage in useless conversation with fools nor should we put ourselves into traps that are set up to trap us and make the cause of Christ look foolish.

PRO 26:4 Do not answer a fool according to his folly, Lest you also be like him.

We must not use hateful, sarcastic, angry, deceitful, vulgar, rude words in responding to them.

PRO 26:5 Answer a fool as his folly deserves, Lest he be wise in his own eyes.

We should use kind words **coupled with truth and logic**.

- i. Christians must be like Jesus described.

MAT 10:16 "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; therefore be shrewd as serpents, and innocent as doves.

- 1) The Greek “phronimos” [fro’ nee mos] means “wise, prudent, shrewd.”
- 2) Christians must be wise in a violent, dangerous world, but still remain “innocent as doves.”
- 3) See Matt. 7:24; 10:16; 24:45; Rom. 11:25; 12:16; 1 Cor. 4:10; 10:15; 2 Cor. 11:29.

**Note:**

1. Failure to be ready may do damage to our own faith.

- a. Not being prepared may cause us to be persuaded by the foolish arguments of the unsaved.

- b. Not knowing the answer may cause us to think there is no answer.
  - c. We have lost some wonderful young people when they attend atheistic schools unprepared.
2. It may cause others not to come to Christ.
  3. Outsiders may use this failure to give adequate defense as an occasion of mocking us.

### **“Good Conscience”**

**1PE 3:16 and keep a good [clear] conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered [falsely accused], those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame [exposed as liars and ashamed of their slander].**

1. Christians must “keep a good conscience” by living in such a way that they do not violate conscience. (Rom. 14:23).
2. Christians who are faithful to their consciences, enlightened by God’s word, will put their critics to shame.
3. “may be put to share” may be in this life if their lies against Christians are exposed and for sure at the judgment when Christian enter into eternal life.

**1PE 3:17 For it is better, if God should will it so, that you suffer [unjustly] for doing what is right rather than [justly] for doing what is wrong [evil].**

1. Peter uses the optative mode of remote possibility - Greek “the’loi”
2. The chances of God’s will being that His children all suffer for doing good are slight.
3. It is acceptable to “suffer for doing what is right.”
4. It is shameful for a Christian to suffer “for doing what is wrong.” (1 Pet. 4:16)

## **1 Peter 3:18-21**

### **Introduction.**

- I. The apostle Peter wrote. (1 Pet. 3:18-21).

**18 For Christ also died for sins once for all, the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; 19 in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison, 20 who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water. 21 And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you-- not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience-- through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,**

- II. This passage is very simple in some ways, but parts of it are very difficult and very controversial.

## Christ Died “Once For All”

**1PE 3:18 For Christ also died for sins once for all [men], the just for the unjust, in order that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;**

1. “Christ also died for sins once for all”
    - a. Jesus tasted death for everyone. (Heb. 5:9; Jn. 3:16; 2 Cor. 5:14, 15).
    - b. His sacrifice is all sufficient - “once,” and does not need to be repeated. (Heb. 9:28; 10:10, 12, 14).
    - c. Jesus will never suffer or die again, but is exalted at the right hand of God. (Acts 2:32,33; Heb. 1:3).
  2. “the just (the Sinless One) for the “unjust” (sinful) - 1 Pet. 2:24. See 1 Pet. 1:19; 2:22.
    - a. “dikaios” [dee’ ki os]- righteous. The word is used here to describe One who was completely sinless.
    - b. “adikos” [ah’ dee kos] - unrighteous.
  3. He died that “He might bring us to God.”
    - a. Men were separated from God and needed to be reconciled to Him. (Isa. 53:5).
    - b. Only the blood of Christ, shed in His death, could accomplish this reconciliation.
    - c. He was “put of death in the flesh.” - We will discuss this after verse 22.
      - 1) It can be translated in the locative case “in flesh.” This would emphasize Jesus was put to death in the flesh.
      - 2) It can be translated in the instrumental case “by flesh.” This would emphasize that Jesus was put to death by flesh (sinful men).
- ACT 2:23 this Man, delivered up by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death.**
- 3) Most interpret this as “in flesh,” but it makes sense either way.
  - d. He was “made alive in spirit.”
    - 1) It can be translated in the locative case “in spirit” referring to His human spirit or to the Holy Spirit.
    - 2) It can be translated in the instrumental case “by spirit” referring to the fact that life was restored to His body by the return of the “spirit” to His corpse or “by Spirit” indicating He was raised by the Holy Spirit. (Rom. 8:11).

**1PE 3:19 in which [spirit] also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison,**

- “now” may be the idea, but it is supplied by translators and not in the original text.
- “proclamation” is from “kerusso” [kay roos so] meaning “to proclaim, preach.”

- “in prison” refers to hades - the abode of wicked spirits. (Lk. 16:19-31).
1. The words “in which” refer back to the word “spirit” - either the spirit of Jesus or the Holy Spirit.
  2. Scholars have really differed on the meaning of this most difficult verse that will later be discussed.

**1PE 3:20 who [spirits] once were disobedient, when the patience [longsuffering] of God kept waiting in the days of Noah, during the construction of the ark, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through the water.**

- “persons” is plural of “psuche” [psoo khay’] meaning “soul, life, person.” (Matt. 10:28; 2:20; Rom. 13:1).
  - “few” is very literal here, but it can be used in a comparative sense. (Matt. 7:13, 14).
1. The main point of the passage is clear.
    - a. Noah and his family "were saved through water." (NIV, 1 Pet. 3:20). See Genesis 7:13.
    - b. The word "through" (Gr. di'a) means "through, by, by means of."
    - c. The same water that destroyed the antediluvian population saved (brought to safety) Noah and his family.
  2. All who were in the ark were by means of water saved, that is, lifted above the destruction.
    - a. “kibotos” [kee bo tos’] - box, chest, ark (ship), ark (covenant box).
    - b. The “ark” of Noah was very large - 450 long, 75 feet wide, 45 feet high.
    - c. See Heb. 9:4; Matt. 24:38; Lk. 17:27).
  3. This was by God’s grace - not because of merit. (Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:8, 9).

### **“Baptism Now Saves You”**

**1PE 3:21 And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you-- not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience-- through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,**

- “antitupos” [an tee’ too pos] - like figure, corresponding to, copy, antitype, representation.
1. **Peter emphasizes that baptism corresponds to Noah's salvation.**
    - a. Peter affirms "baptism now saves you." (1 Pet. 3:21).
    - b. The word “saves” [Gr. so’zo] is the same word found in Mark 16:16 and Acts 2:40.
  2. Many preachers and teachers today say, “Baptism has nothing to do with salvation. You don’t need to be baptized.”
    - a. **Peter does not agree.** (Acts 2:38; 22:16; 10:47, 48).
    - b. See Acts 8:36; Tit. 3:5; Gal. 3:26, 27.

- c. Even John's baptism was for the forgiveness of sins. (Mk. 1:4; Lk. 3:3).
3. Negatively, it is not "a removal of dirt from the body." Gr. "rhu'pos" - dirt, filth
- a. It is not for the cleansing of the body.
  - b. It is not a mere bath, but has deep spiritual meaning. (Rom. 6:3, 4).
4. Positively, it is "an appeal to God for a clear conscience." **NASB**
- a. The Greek word "ep e ro' te ma" (appeal, earnest request, interrogation, question, pledge) may have this idea.
    - 1) McCord "the appeal to God of a clean conscience."
    - 2) It comes from the verb "eperotao" [ep e ro\_tah'\_o] meaning "interrogate, question, ask." (Matt. 12:10; 17:10; Rom. 10:20).
  - b. The man who desires a clear conscience asks, "How can I have a clear conscience?"
  - c. The answer is "baptism." (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16).
  - d. The ASV reads "the interrogation of a good conscience toward God."
    - 1) The idea is similar.
    - 2) The one who has a good conscience (though a sinner like Paul) asks, "What must I do to be saved?" The answer is baptism. (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16).
    - 3) The answer comes like God's answer to Saul of Tarsus. (Acts 22:16).
    - 4) Saul of Tarsus possessed a good conscience while in unbelief and a persecutor of the church. (Acts 23:1).
  - e. NIV - "pledge of a good conscience" or in footnote "response of a good conscience."
  - f. Lit. "an answer [response, interrogation] of a good conscience toward God"
5. Baptism gains its power "through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. 3:21).
- a. Without the resurrection the death of Christ was vain. (1 Cor. 15:12-19).
  - b. By the resurrection Jesus "was declared [designated] the Son of God." (Rom. 1:4).
    - 1) "horizo" [ho ree' zo]- I appoint, designate, determine, set.
    - 2) Resurrection was a confirmation of His Sonship.
  - c. The resurrection reveals Jesus was the Son of God and His atonement was real and valid.
6. Peter used the language of "type" and "anti-type."
- a. A type is something in the Old Testament which prefigured something in the New Testament.



- b. Noah's salvation was the type.
- c. Baptism is the anti-type - the thing fore-shadowed.
- d. The anti-type baptism "now saves you."

1. Baptism is <b>not a meritorious act</b> . (Tit. 3:5; Eph. 2:5, 8-9; Rom. 11:6).	3. We do not earn salvation by any response or action.
2. Faith, repentance, confession are not works of merit.	4. Baptism is an act of faith and obedience.

<b>Baptism is by immersion.</b>	
1. The Greek verb “baptizo” [bap tee’ zo] means “to submerge, to immerse.”	
2. Our English word “baptism” is not a translation, but a transliteration of the Greek noun “bap’ tisma” or “baptismos”.	
3. Scriptures confirming baptism is by immersion . (Matt. 3:13-17; Mk. 1:10; Jn. 3:23; Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12).	

### Jesus “Is At The Right Hand Of God”

**1PE 3:22 who [Jesus] is at the right hand of God [reigning as King], having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.**

- 1. Jesus is exalted as King at “the right hand of God.” (Acts 2:33; Heb. 1:3). See also Psa. 110:1; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20-22).
- 2. The words “having gone into heaven” refer to His ascension. (Acts 1:8-11).
- 3. Jesus has all authority. (Matt. 28:18; Jn. 17:2; Phil 2:8-11). See 1 Cor. 15:24-28.
- 4. We must obey Christ and His words. (Jn. 12:48; Matt. 28:18-20).

### The Difficult Point

- 1. The difficult point of this passage is verses 18 and 19 where it speaks of Jesus preaching "unto the spirits in prison."
- 2. These verses **raise many questions**.
- 3. What is the meaning of the words “put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit?”
  - a. The words are usually interpreted that the fleshy Jesus died on the cross - not some spirit.
  - b. The words “in flesh” can also mean “by flesh” and refer to the fact that sinful men put Jesus to death.
  - c. The words can mean that Jesus was put to death in flesh, but life returned when His spirit returned to Him. (Matt. 26:41; 27:50; Lk. 23:46; Jn. 19:30).
  - d. The words “made alive in the spirit” are also difficult.

- 1) The word “zoopoie’o” - means to “give life, make alive, bring to life.” (Rom. 4:17; 8:11; 1 Cor. 15:36, 45). In the N.T. met. “to quicken with the life of salvation” (Jno. 6:63; 2 Cor. 3:6).
- 2) The word “spirit” may refer to the “spirit of Jesus.” It did not die on the cross, but went to Paradise. (Lk. 23:46). Some think the words “made alive” mean energized or was active and went to the hadean world.
- 3) The word “spirit” may also refer to the Holy Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead. (Rom. 8:11).
  - McCord “but brought to life by the Spirit.”
  - NIV “but made alive by the Spirit.”

**Note:** It is interesting that the Bible not only teaches the Spirit gives life (Rom. 8:11), but it teaches that Jesus is “a life giving spirit.” (1 Cor. 15:45).

4. Another very hard part of this passage are the words, “in which also He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison.”

1. What “prison” is Peter referring to in this verse?	5. What message was preached to the spirits?
2. When did Jesus preach to the spirits in prison?	6. Were the spirits given a second chance?
3. Did Jesus do this personally or though another?	7. Why was the message given to this select group and not to others?
4. Who are the spirits? Angels? Demons? Men?	8. Is God a respecter of persons?

## Interpretations

### Interpretation 1

- I. Some modern scholars have conjectured that Peter makes reference to an apocryphal tale of Enoch's descent into Hades told in a Jewish book.
  - A. It is argued the name Enoch has dropped out of the text because of the likeness of the words in Greek "in which also" (enokai) to the Greek for "Enoch."
  - B. Enoch is “enoch” (Jude 14).
  - C. This accounts for the translations in Moffatt and Goodspeed.
- II. There is no evidence that Peter is making reference to the apocryphal tale of Enoch.
  - A. This is unfounded conjecture.
  - B. This translation is not supported by the Greek manuscripts or by the major translations of the Bible.

**Interpretation 2** - Some contend this passage teaches men will be given a second chance.

- I. Some argue "the spirits" were the wicked men of Noah's day “now in prison.” **NASB**

- II. Some contend Jesus between His death and resurrection preached to these spirits now in prison.
- III. They believe Jesus was giving them **a second chance**.
  - A. There is no evidence any man will be given a second chance after death.
    - 1. **The emphasis of God’s word is that we prepare now.** (2 Cor. 6:2).
    - 2. Prov. 27:1.
  - B. This would make God “a respecter of persons” which He is not. (Acts 10:34,35).
  - C. We must give account “for the things done in the body.” (2 Cor. 5:10; Rom. 14:12; Heb. 9:27).
  - D. This contradicts the teaching of Christ who taught once a person is in torment he cannot escape. (Lk. 16:23, 24).
  - E. **Men twist the scriptures in attempt to avoid the idea that many will be lost.**

1. There is no hell.	4. “Once saved always saved.”	7. The Bible is a myth.
2. Men will be given a second chance.	5. There is no God, no sin, no judgment.	8. Man is an animal and unaccountable for his actions.
3. Some advocate the doctrine of universalism.	6. There is a God, but He does not hold man accountable.	9. Most any kind of faith saves.

**III. A Common Brotherhood Interpretation**

- I. The words "put to death in the flesh" referred to the death of Christ on the cross.
  - A. Jesus had been manifested "in flesh." (1 Tim. 3:16; Jn. 1:14).
  - B. The physical body of Jesus was nailed to the cross.
  - C. The words "made alive in the spirit" may refer to the Holy Spirit.
    - 1. **NIV** “made alive by the Spirit.” See McCord “but brought to life by the Spirit
    - 2. The Bible teaches Jesus was raised from the dead by the Holy Spirit. (Rom. 8:11).

**ROM 8:11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.**

**Note:**

- 1. Lit. “Put to death in flesh, but made alive in spirit.”
- 2. The Greek does not have the definite article before either "flesh" or "spirit."
- 3. Some believe it is the divine Spirit of Jesus working through the Holy Spirit.

4. Jesus' spirit did not die on the cross; so the words "made alive" are used in some figurative sense.

## II. The preaching was done in this manner.

<b>Christ</b>
<b>Holy Spirit</b>
<b>Noah</b>
<b>Antediluvians</b>

A. The Bible calls Noah "a preacher of righteousness." (2 Pet. 2:5).

**2PE 2:5 and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a preacher of righteousness, with seven others, when He brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly;**

1. The Holy Spirit preached through the prophets. (1 Pet. 1:11)

**1PE 1:11 seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.**

**2PE 1:21 for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.**

2. The preaching of Noah was directed by the Holy Spirit. (Gen. 6:3).

**GEN 6:3 Then the \Lord\ said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."**

**1PE 1:11 seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.**

3. Noah had the Holy Spirit in him and by the Spirit he preached to the wicked people of his day who were later drown in the flood, but are called "spirits" at the time of the writing of this epistle.

4. They did not repent and were in prison (Tartarus, hades, abyss) at the time Peter wrote.

5. Some think the "spirits" were in prison in the sense of being in bondage to sin.

**LUK 4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim release to the captives, And recovery of sight to the blind, To set free those who are downtrodden,**

a. This view has Christ preaching through the Holy Spirit and Noah to those in the prison house of sin.

b. They were "spirits" at the time of writing, but were slaves to sin in the flesh in Noah's day.

6. Jesus did not personally preach to the antediluvians.

a. Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:17, "He came and preached peace to you that were afar off (Gentiles), and to them that were nigh" (Jews).

- b. There is no evidence the Lord after His resurrection ever in His own person preached to the Gentiles.
  - c. This preaching was done by Paul and the other apostles.
  - d. The language of 1 Peter 3:19 does not demand that Jesus did the preaching described personally.
7. The points of bringing up the antediluvians was that they rejected salvation by water. They refused to repent and submit to God and prepare for the flood. The end result is that they are now in prison and stand condemned.

**Note.**

- 1. The word "spirits" referred to the wicked spirits of men who lived before the flood.
- 2. The "spirits" were not "in prison" **at the time of the preaching**, but at the time Peter was writing.
- 3. The NASB has "the spirits *now* in prison."
- 4. God had been longsuffering 120 years. (Gen. 6:3).
- 5. Only a few paid attention to his preaching.

**Interpretation 4** - Others say Jesus went to "hades" or "tartarus" to make a proclamation (Gr. kerusso) of victory to the antediluvians.

- I. Advocates of this view teach men are given a second chance.
- II. Advocates of this view do not answer these questions.
  - A. Why was a proclamation made just to this group?
  - B. **What special proclamation was made to them?**
  - C. Was Jesus merely taunting these suffering "spirits"?
  - D. The scriptures teach Christ went to "Paradise" at death. (Lk. 23:43).

**Interpretation 5** - Others have a different interpretation of this passage.

- I. Many contend the word "spirits" referred to wicked angels. (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 1:6).
  - A. Angels are called "spirits" in Hebrews. (Heb. 1:7,13, 14).

**HEB 1:7 And of the angels He says, "Who makes His angels winds, And His ministers a flame of fire."**

**HEB 1:13 But to which of the angels has He ever said, "Sit at My right hand, Until I make Thine enemies A footstool for Thy feet"?**

**HEB 1:14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent out to render service for the sake of those who will inherit salvation?**

B. They maintain the angels sinned by co-inhabiting with the "daughters of men." (Gen. 6:1-4).

**GEN 6:1** Now it came about, when men began to multiply on the face of the land, and daughters were born to them,

**GEN 6:2** that the sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful; and they took wives for themselves, whomever they chose.

**GEN 6:3** Then the Lord said, "My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."

**GEN 6:4** The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.

C. Some facets of this interpretation.

1. It is argued that the "sons of God" refer to angels who left heaven (Jude 6) and married "daughters of men." "The sons of God" refer to angels throughout the book of Job. (Job 1:6;2:1;38:7).
2. It is argued by many who hold this position that they did to stop the atonement of Christ by producing a offspring that was not human (half angels and half men).
3. It is argued that the offspring were the "Nephilim," that is giants. See R.S.V.
4. It is believed Jude 6 and 7 referred to the angel's fornication with the daughters of men.

**JUD 1:6** And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day.

**JUD 1:7** Just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example, in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire. NASB

**JUD 1:6** And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home-- these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day.

**JUD 1:7** In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire.

NIV

5. It is argued these wicked angels were in prison when Jesus was raised from the dead. (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6).
6. It is affirmed that while the body of Jesus was in the tomb that His spirit was "made alive" (was energized), and He went and made a proclamation to "the spirits [wicked angels] in prison."
7. Most who hold this view do not believe Jesus preached to the wicked angels for the purpose of salvation.
8. They argue the word "preach" is not the word for proclaiming the gospel, but it means to make a proclamation.
  - a. Peter used the Greek "kerus'so."
  - b. It was used in secular Greek of an official announcement or proclamation made by a representative of a government.
  - c. He did not use the Greek word "euaggeli'zomai" which means "to preach the gospel."

9. Jesus announced to the wicked angels that He had made atonement for the sins of man and the doom of the angels was certain.
10. One major problem with this interpretation is angels are sexless creatures. (Matt. 22:30).
  - a. The words “sons of God” can refer to the men.

**LUK 3:38 the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.**

**GAL 3:26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.**

**GAL 3:27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.**

- b. Jesus went to “Paradise” on the day He died. (Lk. 22:43).

**LUK 23:43 And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, today you shall be with Me in Paradise."**

**Note:**

- Angels have appeared in human form (Gen. 18:1-3), but there is no evidence that they had or could have sexual intercourse with women.
- It would be strange if God would fault women for the sin of angels. Both men and women stood condemned because of their wickedness.
- It would appear godly men married worldly women, and this added to the corruption of mankind. (1 Cor. 15:33).
- The antediluvians were very evil and those marriages added to the corruption.
- If the “daughters of men” were evil, the men from the context of Genesis were for sure evil.
  - c. “Sons of God” can refer to the godly descendants of Seth. (Lk. 3:38).
  - d. The “Nephilim” were on the earth before and after these marriages occurred.
  - e. They are not the offspring of these unions.

**GEN 6:4 The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men, and they bore children to them. Those were the mighty men who were of old, men of renown.**

- f. The “Nephilim” is translated by the some versions as “giants,” but this is not a correct translation. It comes from a Hebrew noun “naphal” meaning “to fall” or “to fall upon.” It has reference to strong, violent, fallen men. It can refer to attackers, bandits, etc.

**NUM 13:33 "There also we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak are part of the Nephilim); and we became like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight." "The sons of Anak (the long-necked one) are a part of the “Nephilim.” They may have been a good bit taller than the Israelite’s, but there is no evidence that they were half angels and half men. The language here is clearly hyperbolic or else these men would have been several hundred feet tall.**

Anak ("long-necked," i.e., "a giant").

- The son of Arba, the founder of Kiriath-arba. He was the progenitor of a race of giants called Anakim.
- These Anakim were a terror to the children of Israel (NUM 13:22, 28) but were driven out by Caleb, who came

into possession of Hebron (JOS 15:13-14).

**Comments:**

1. There is no revealed scriptural reason to make a proclamation to the fallen, wicked angels in prison or Tartarus.
2. It is more in keeping with scriptures to view these unions as intermarriage of the godly line of Seth (described in Gen. 4:25-5:32) with the ungodly line of Cain (Gen. 4:1-24).

**Spirits:**

1. Demons are called “unclean spirits.” (Matt. 10:1; Mk. 1:27; 3:11; 5:13; 6:7; Lk. 4:36; 6:18; 10:20; Acts 5:16; 8:7; Rev. 16:13).
2. Men who have parted this life are also called “spirits”.

**HEB 12:9 Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live?**

**HEB 12:23 to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous men made perfect,**

3. Angels can also be called “spirits.” (Heb. 1:14).

**Notes:**

**EPH 4:8 Therefore it says, "When He ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives, And He gave gifts to men."**

**EPH 4:9 (Now this expression, "He ascended," what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth?**

**EPH 4:10 He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)**

1. “He led captive a host of captives” - NASB	3. “He ascended into the heights with captives in his train.” NEB
2. “He led captive in his train” - NIV	4. Lit. “He led captive captivity.”

1. “descended into the lower parts of the earth”

- a. Some think this means Jesus went to “hades” or “tartarus” at His death.
- b. Others think this refers to the incarnation of Jesus.
  - 1) “lower parts” may be defined by the words “of the earth” - Genitive of apposition or definition.

NEB “he also descended to the lowest level, down to the very earth.”

- 2) He is speaking of the incarnation of Christ versus His ascension and exaltation. The One who came to this earth greatly humbled Himself, but not He is highly exalted. (Phil. 2:3-10).

**Tartarus** is from the Greek “tartaro’o”



1. This word means “to consign to Tartarus, to cast or thrust down to Tartarus.”
2. This is the place where wicked angels are chained. (2 Pet. 2:4).
3. “Tartarus” or “hades” appears to be the same place. (2 Pet. 2:4; Lk. 16:23, 24).

**Note:** “Hades” denotes grave or abode of wicked spirits. “Tartarus” in the N.T. never refers to the “grave.”

### **Two Places**

1. Some believe Jesus went 2 places between His death and resurrection - Paradise and Hades (Tartarus).
2. It is believed He made a proclamation to them and led His defeated enemies in a personal triumphal procession as ancient monarchs often led their captives. See Eph. 4:8-10.
3. The language could also be understood that He led those doomed to punishment without the death of Jesus in a triumphal procession. Once Jesus died men could be saved.
4. Assuming Jesus did lead His defeated enemies in a personal triumphal procession, it is very uncertain this event related to the preaching or proclamation made to the disobedient antediluvians.

### **Greek**

1. “aichmalosi’a” - captivity, state of captivity, captive multitude. (Eph. 4:8; Rev. 13:10).
2. “aichmaloteu’o” - to lead captive; met. “to captivate.”
3. “He led captive a captive multitude”
4. A possible translation could be, “He lead captivated a captive multitude.”
  - a. See 2 Tim. 3:6.
  - b. He motivated multitudes of sinners to be saved by His atoning death, burial and resurrection.

### **“spirit”**

1. “spirit” inhabited His body. (Matt. 26:41; 27:50; Lk. 23:46; Jno. 19:30).
2. Life was restored to His corpse when His spirit returned to His body on resurrection morning. The Holy Spirit raised Jesus. (Rom. 8:11).

**PHI 2:10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth,**

**PHI 2:11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**

**ROM 10:6 But the righteousness based on faith speaks thus, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down),**

**ROM 10:7 or ' Who will descend into the abyss?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). " See Deut. 30:13**

1. “Abyss” can mean “grave or abode of evil spirits” like “hades.”
  - a. It is from “abussos” - bottomless place, the underworld, the lower regions, the abyss of Sheol.

- b. It is never used in a good sense.
  - d. It occurs several times in the New Testament. (Lk. 8:31; Rom. 10:7; Rev. 9:1,2, 11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1,3).
2. Here it likely means the “grave.”
- a. McCord renders it the “grave” in Romans 10:7 that seems to be its meaning in this context.
  - b. Christ was in the “grave” or “tomb”.
  - c. “Hades” could also be used of the “grave.” (Acts 2:27,31; 13:35).

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